

CLAIMS

What is Claimed is:

1. A method for distributed image processing comprising:
processing image data at a user computer that includes a user memory,
5 the user memory including a user database;
storing image related data and the processed image data in the user
database;
transmitting the image related data and the processed image data from
the user computer to a host site in communication with the user computer, the host site
10 including a host memory, and the host memory including a host database; and,
storing the image related data and the processed image data in the host
database.
2. The method of Claim 1 further comprising a customer computer sending
15 input data to the host site, and the host site selectively retrieving processed image data
and image related data from the host database based on the input data.
3. The method of Claim 2 further comprising the host site sending an image
order to the user computer based on the input data, and the user computer selectively
20 transmitting image data for ordered images in a high resolution format to an image
laboratory based on the image order, wherein the input data further comprises the
image order.
4. The method of Claim 2 further comprising adding a JPEG header to the
25 retrieved processed image data.
5. The method of Claim 1 further comprising entering image related data at
the user computer, and creating the user database based on the image related data.

6. The method of Claim 1 wherein the processing step further comprises converting the image data to a JPEG format.

5 7. The method of Claim 1 wherein the processing step further comprises manipulating the image data.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the processing step further comprises at least one of the following steps: cropping the image data or rotating the image data.

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9. The method of Claim 1 further comprising storing in the user memory the image data in a high resolution format, the image data corresponding to a plurality of images, wherein the processing step further comprises selectively compressing, based on user preferences, image data for a subset of the plurality of images into at least a
15 thumbnail or a low resolution format.

10. The method of Claim 8 further comprising transmitting the image data for the subset of the plurality of images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format to the host site.

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11. The method of Claim 1 further comprising automatically processing the image data at the user computer when a user requests automatic processing.

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12. A system for distributed image processing comprising:

a host site including a host communication device and a host memory, the host communication device configured to receive processed image data and image related data from a user computer, and the host memory in communication with the host communication device, wherein the host memory includes a host database, and the host database includes the processed image data and the image related data; and,

a user computer in communication with the host site, wherein the user computer includes a user processing unit configured to process image data, a user memory configured to store a user database that includes the processed image data and the image related data, and a user communication device configured to transmit the processed image data and the image related data to the host site.

13. The system of Claim 12 wherein the processed image data further comprises image data in at least one of a thumbnail or a low resolution format.

14. The system of Claim 12 wherein the user processing unit is configured to automatically process the image data by compressing image data in a high resolution format to image data in at least one of a thumbnail or a low resolution format.

15. The system of Claim 12 wherein the user processing unit is configured to automatically process the image data by converting the image data into a predetermined format.

16. The system of Claim 15 wherein the predetermined format is a JPEG format.

17. The system of Claim 12 further comprising a customer computer in communication with the host site, the customer computer configured to transmit an image order to the host site, wherein the host site is configured to transmit the image order to the user computer.

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18. The system of Claim 17 further comprising an image laboratory comprising a communication device and an output device, the user computer configured to selectively transmit to the image laboratory image data in a high resolution format based on the image order, wherein the image laboratory communication device is
10 configured to receive the image data in the high resolution format and the image laboratory output device is configured to print an image based on the image data in the high resolution format.

19. A method for distributed image storage comprising:
15 storing a plurality of images in a high resolution format and at least one of a thumbnail or a low resolution format at a user computer;
selecting a subset of the plurality of images for transmission to a host site;
transmitting the selected subset of images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format to the host site;
20 receiving the subset of images at the host site; and,
providing access to the subset of images to a customer based on a customer identifier.

20. The method of Claim 19 further comprising sending an image order from a
25 customer computer to the host site.

21. The method of Claim 20 further comprising the host site receiving the image order from the customer computer, and the host site sending the image order to the user computer.

22. The method of Claim 21 further comprising the user computer receiving the image order from the host site, and the user computer sending ordered images in a high resolution format to an image laboratory based on the image order received from the host site, the ordered images being a subset of the plurality of images.

23. The method of Claim 19 further comprising storing other pluralities of images in the high resolution and at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution formats at other user computers.

24. The method of Claim 23 further comprising selecting other subsets of the other pluralities of images for transmission to the host site at the other user computers.

25. The method of Claim 24 further comprising transmitting the other selected subsets of images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format to the host site.

26. The method of Claim 25 further comprising receiving the other subsets of images at the host site.

27. A system for distributed image processing comprising:

a user computer comprising a user memory and a user communication device, wherein the user memory includes a plurality of images in a high resolution format and at least one of a thumbnail or a low resolution format, and the user communication device is configured to transmit a subset, based on user preferences, of the plurality of images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format to a host site; and,

the host site in communication with the user computer, the host site including a communication device and a memory, wherein the host communication device is configured to receive the subset of the plurality of images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format, and the host memory includes the subset of the plurality of images, the host site providing access to the subset of the plurality of images to a customer computer based on a customer identifier.

28. The system of Claim 27 further comprising the customer computer in communication with the host site, the customer computer including a communication device, the customer communication device configured to transmit an image order to the host site.

29. The system of Claim 28 wherein the host communication device is configured to receive the image order from the customer computer and transmit the image order to the user computer.

30. The system of Claim 29 further comprising an image laboratory, the image laboratory including an output device and a communication device, wherein the user computer communication device is configured to transmit ordered images in the high resolution format to the image laboratory based on the image order, the ordered images
5 being a subset of the plurality of images, wherein the image laboratory communication device is configured to receive the ordered images in the high resolution format and the image laboratory output device is configured to output the ordered images.

31. The system of Claim 27 further comprising other user computers, the
10 other user computers comprising other user memories and other user communication devices, the other user memories includes other pluralities of images in high resolution format and at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format, and the other user communication devices are configured to transmit other subsets of the pluralities of
15 images in at least one of the thumbnail or the low resolution format to the host site, wherein the host communication device is configured to receive the other subsets of the other pluralities of images, and the host memory includes the other subsets of the other pluralities of images.